

# The Truth about A.:A.:

*Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law.*

The intention of this document is to set the record straight about the A.:A.: and the many misconceptions that exist around it.

This document's nature is intended to be simple and concise, yet fairly thorough.

This document has been written by several individuals and the information has been compiled over an extended period of time.

The authors have absolutely no connection to the A.:A.: and simply seek the Truth so that it may be known.

It should be noted that the authors personally believe that the Work involved in the A.:A.: is of primary importance for individuals, and the politics of the A.:A.: are virtually irrelevant to this work. Nonetheless, the authors believe that the A.:A.: should work without mystery, and individuals who seek information on this subject should be provided with it.

This document is being publicized on the first day of Anno IV:xxi, era novae, the Vernal Equinox of 2013, era vulgaris.

The contents of this document are as follows:

- I. What is the A.:A.?
- II. Is the A.:A.: Eternal or Temporal?
- III. Is there "One True A.:A.:"?
- IV. Are there such things as "Lineages" in the A.:A.?:
- V. Who is the "One True A.:A.:" then?

## **I. What is the A.:A.?:**

- 1) The A.:A.: is a magical order created by [Aleister Edward Crowley](#) and [George Cecil Jones](#) in 1907.
- 2) The A.:A.: is based in the Law of [Thelema](#), whose central tenet is "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law."
- 3) Crowley published [The Equinox: A Review of Scientific Illuminism](#) as the official organ of the A.:A.: Volume I, No.1-10, was published semiannually from 1909-1913. It contains virtually all of the official instructions and texts of the A.:A.:.

- 4) The A.:A.: is structured on "[Grades](#)" that correspond with the Tree of Life. Aspirants have to complete the Tasks of each Grade in order to progress to the next Grade.
- 5) The A.:A.: is private and individual in its work. Everyone in the A.:A.: theoretically only knows their superior and anyone they supervise (their "inferior," with no moral connotations).
- 6) Authority within the A.:A.: does not confer authority within Ordo Templi Orientis (O.T.O.), nor does authority within Ordo Templi Orientis confer authority within the A.:A.:.

## **II. Is the A.:A.: Eternal or Temporal?**

1) The A.:A.: as a temporal organization undoubtedly began in 1907 when it was created by Aleister Crowley and George Cecil Jones.

2) "A.:A.:" is also a name for the "Secret Order" or "Inner Order" or "interior school" that has always supposedly existed.

A) This is essentially a Rosicrucian idea that was popularized by Karl von Eckartshausen's book [The Cloud upon the Sanctuary](#). It is therefore a name for the "Order" that all men attain upon enlightenment or "Adepthood," by virtue of their enlightenment. It includes people like Buddha and Mohammed who obviously had no connection to "esoteric orders" as we know them now.

B) This same idea was adapted in the text written by Crowley for his temporal organization called "[An Account of A.:A.:](#)." In this text, it clearly states, "From all time there has been an exterior school based on the interior one, of which it is but the outer expression." That is, there is one "interior order" and there may be many "exterior orders." The same text goes on to say, "But all exterior societies subsist only by virtue of this interior one. *As soon as external societies wish to transform a temple of wisdom into a political edifice, the interior society retires and leaves only the letter without the spirit.*" [emphasis added]

### **3) THEREFORE:**

A) "A.:A.:" refers to both an eternal/"sempiternal" and a temporal order or "school." Confusion often arises because of the conflation of these two things.

B) The A.:A.: as a concept meaning an "Inner Order" or eternal group of enlightened individuals refers to a non-temporal or "sempiternal" (unchanging) organization that is not physical or temporal, but has an "exterior school" as its outer expression.

C) The A.:A.: as a physical organization is temporal and began in 1907, and it is one "exterior school" that represents the sempiternal, interior school.

### **III. Is there "One True A.:A.:"?**

1) INSOFAR as one is speaking about the *sempiternal, interior school* of illuminated individuals, there has only been one A.:A.: and there always will be one A.:A.:, regardless of how many "exterior schools" exist as its outer expression. This is true based on the very definition of the A.:A.: as a "sempiternal" order; it is a philosophical and not an empirical claim.

2) INSOFAR as one is speaking about the *temporal "exterior schools"* - one of which is the A.:A.: began in 1907 by A. Crowley and G.C. Jones - then this "temporal" A.:A.: is simply one "exterior school" out of many possible ones.

A) If we are speaking about the bureaucratic, organization structure of the "temporal" A.:A.:, then one could argue that there was intended to be one temporal, organizational structure of A.:A.:.

B) This temporal, organization structure began with Aleister Crowley as its head in 1907, and it was designed to be "passed down" from within the ranks. More on this later.

#### **3) THEREFORE:**

A) There is one sempiternal, interior school that has always existed and will always exist. There are many exterior schools that exist, of which the A.:A.: created in 1907 by Crowley & Jones is one case.

i) This was and is and always will be the "One True A.:A.:" without regard to anything temporal.

B) Within this temporal organization of the A.:A.: started in 1907, it is arguable that there is a single bureaucratic, governmental, organizational structure.

i) On the temporal level, for this to be the "One True A.:A.:", the organization must show continuity back to the original temporal, governmental structure by virtue of:

a) being directly appointed by the head of the organization *OR*

b) upon the death or resignation of the head of the organization, being the member of the highest grade.

### **IV. Are there such things as "Lineages" in the A.:A.?:**

1) The idea of "One True A.:A.:" is often invoked in order to discredit the idea that there are "lineages" within the A.:A.:.

2) **FACT:** All members of the A.:A.: theoretically only know their superior and inferior(s). This is, by definition, a "chain" or "lineage" from teacher to student. Lineage is the very structure of the A.:A.:.

A) **THEREFORE:** By this simple, single fact, it is arguable that there are lineages within the A.:A.:. In fact, its nature is to create lineages from teachers to students.

3) **POSSIBLE REBUTTAL:** Although there are "lineages" from teacher to student within the A.:A.:, there is - in theory - a single governmental, organizational structure that oversees the work of *all* teachers and students.

A) **THEREFORE:** The teacher-student chain may be called a "lineage" but there is a single temporal organizational structure. Organizations that split off from this single temporal bureaucracy are not "lineages" but are splinter groups without connection to the temporal organization.

4) It is also true that one could potentially "make contact" with the sempiternal, interior school and form a new "exterior school." This would, by definition, be connected to the *sempiternal* A.:A.: but it would NOT be connected to the *temporal* A.:A.: that began in 1907 by Crowley & Jones.

A) **THEREFORE:** Individuals may - in theory - legitimately claim to have "made contact" with the *sempiternal* A.:A.: but, if they are not within the *temporal* A.:A.: structure, they CAN NOT claim to be the legitimate descendent or heir of the *temporal* A.:A.: started in 1907 by Crowley & Jones.

B) **THEREFORE:** Anyone can, in theory, claim descent from the *sempiternal* A.:A.: but claiming descent from the *temporal* A.:A.: requires proving continuity back to the original temporal, governmental structure by virtue of:

- i) being directly appointed by the head of the organization *OR*
- ii) upon the death or resignation of the head of the organization, being the member of the highest grade.

5) **IN BRIEF:** There are lineages in the sense of a chain between teachers and students (and the students of these students, et cetera). These lineages occur within a single, temporal, governmental structure. Any temporal organizations that are not part of this single temporal structure are not "lineages," but are splinter groups.

## **V. Who is the "One True A.:A.:" then?**

1) It has already been established that the *sempiternal* A.:A.: is not in question.

2) **FACT:** The temporal, "exterior school" of the A.:A.: - established in 1907 by Crowley & Jones - is the "One True A.:A.:" in the temporal sense.

A) **THEREFORE:** The "One True A.:A.:" in the temporal sense must show continuity back to the original head of this temporal organization, Aleister Crowley.

B) In order to find the "One True A.:A.:" in the temporal sense, we must therefore begin at the original head of the temporal A.:A.:, Aleister Crowley, and find who was either directly appointed by the head of the organization *OR*, upon the death or resignation of the head of the organization, the member of the highest grade.

3) **FACT:** Aleister Crowley was the head of the temporal organization of the A.:A.: from its creation in 1907 until his death in 1947.

4) **FACT:** Karl Germer (a.k.a. Frater Saturnus; 1885-1962) was acknowledged as the grade of 8=3 (a.k.a. Magister Templi) by Aleister Crowley.

A) Karl Germer was universally acknowledged as the head of the temporal organization of the A.:A.: from Crowley's death in 1947 until Germer's death in 1962.

5) **FACT:** Karl Germer did not directly appoint a head of the temporal organization of the A.:A.: before his death.

A) **THEREFORE:** Since there was not a direct appointment, we must look at the members of the organization and see who had the highest grade.

6) What are the teacher-student lines that occurred, then?

A) Aleister Crowley's student was Jane Wolfe (a.k.a. Soror Estai; 1875-1958).

i) Jane Wolfe's student was Phyllis Seckler (a.k.a. Soror Meral; 1917-2004).

ii) Phyllis Seckler was acknowledged as the grade of 5=6 by Karl Germer (8=3) while he was the head of the temporal organization of the A.:A.:.

iii) Phyllis Seckler's student was Grady McMurtry (a.k.a. Hymenaeus Alpha; 1918-1985), but later expelled him from the A.:A.:. Further, Hymenaeus Alpha never progressed beyond the grade of Probationer (0=0).

iv) **THEREFORE:** Phyllis Seckler was the grade of 5=6. Hymenaeus Alpha was the grade of 0=0 but was also expelled.

v) It appears that James Eshelman and David Shoemaker were the two highest ranking members under Phyllis Seckler at the time of her death.

vi) In a document, David Shoemaker is given an explicit warrant of Phyllis Seckler where it is written, "As a bearer of the link to the source of the A.:A.: tradition, I hereby affirm David Shoemaker's irrevocable status as an initiate of the A.:A.:, and his authority to admit, supervise and train initiates of the A.:A.: as his conscience dictates." This document does not necessarily indicate that James Eshelman is *not* also an initiate of the A.:A.:, but no such similar document appears to exist granting James Eshelman authority within the A.:A.:.

B) Aleister Crowley initiated Karl Germer.

i) Karl Germer initiated Marcelo Motta (1931-1987).

ii) Karl Germer claimed Marcelo Motta was a "Neophyte at best" (1=10).

*[source: "If one tried to go into or refuting or arguing your recent letters one would run the risk of getting contaminated by the demonic forces that have got hold of you. What I will do is give you the benefit of my experience. It has been my privilege or misfortune to have to watch at least a score of 'experts of delusion' in the last more than thirty-five years, of my connection with Thelema. What you claim - the title or grade of BEAST - is only minor, ie. a repeat of another title. (Yet Crowley assumed the grade only 13 years after he had become a full M.T., while you are at best a Neophyte!" -Karl Germer to Motta, June 9, 1962]*

Further, Marcelo Motta himself claimed to be a Zelator (2=9) after Germer's death.

*[source: "I am the Head of Thelema; I am the Source of Thelemic Policy; I am the Judge and the Reconciler set over you; I am the Vicar of the Christ; I hold the Keys of the KINGDOM, and none shall be admitted any any may be cast out from it by my FIAT; thus did He say, and so shall it be done. A.: 2=9 A.:A.:." -Motta to Sascha Germer, January 1963]*

a) **THEREFORE:** Phyllis Seckler was the ranking member, being of the grade of 5=6 while Motta was never acknowledged as having been more than 1=10 (and claimed himself to be 2=9).

iii) Marcelo Motta's student was James Daniel Gunther.

iv) Gunther voluntarily withdrew from the A.:A.: *[source: Motta published a book titled 'Equinox V:4' in 1982, and in it he wrote, "James Daniel Gunther: once a legitimate O.T.O. representative; demoted for plotting to murder his hierarchic superior; withdrew voluntarily from the A.:A.: and was expelled from the O.T.O." That is, Gunther voluntarily withdrew from the A.:A.: and was therefore no longer part of the organization.]*

a) Gunther's own superior in the A.:A.: believed he had withdrawn.

b) According to *Liber Causae sub figura LXI*, "Listen, we pray you, with attention: for once only does the Great Order knock at any one door." Therefore, James Daniel Gunther voluntarily withdrew himself from the A.:A.: once and for all before 1982.

v) William Breeze and James Wasserman acknowledge Gunther as their Superior in the A.:A.:. Since Gunther withdrew from the A.:A.:, their claim is similarly invalid.

7) The "branch" of the A.:A.: that is currently headed by Gunther claims sole authority as the "One True A.:A.:." Based on the aforementioned evidence, this claim appears to be false. Several arguments have been given by Gunther and his associates which attempt to contradict this evidence:

A) **CLAIM:** Motta published a commentary to *The Book of the Law*, and - because this is forbidden by The Comment - Motta essentially abdicated his own authority. This is also sometimes cited as the reason or cause of Motta's later insanity.

i) **REBUTTAL #1:** Nowhere in any document does Crowley ever state that commenting on *The Book of the Law* abdicates one's authority within the A.:A.:.

ii) **REBUTTAL #2:**

If Gunther and his associates claim authority by virtue of their succession through Motta, and if one takes Motta abdicating his authority within the A.:A.: as true, then Gunther and others cannot claim a valid succession through one (Motta) who was not part of the succession of initiates of the A.:A.:.

iii) **REBUTTAL #3:** Gunther voluntarily resigned from the A.:A.:, and therefore has no authority to claim to be an initiate of the A.:A.: or to initiate other individuals into the A.:A.:, regardless of whether or not Motta abdicated his authority within the A.:A.:.

B) **CLAIM:** Motta was the grade of 6=5 based on the Imprimatur on *Liber Aleph*, therefore he out-ranked Phyllis Seckler who was only acknowledged as the grade of 5=6 by Karl Germer.

i) **REBUTTAL #1:** The grades listed on the Imprimatur of any publication are honorary grades and do not refer to actual, acknowledged grades within the A.:A.:. The "Praemonstrator" is always honorarily 7=4, the "Imperator" is always honorarily 6=5, and the "Cancellarius" is always honorarily 5=6. There are several examples of individuals having honorary degrees in the Imprimatur that are both above and below their acknowledged A.:A.: grade, and there are even examples of Crowley being several of the honorary grades in a single publication.

ii) **REBUTTAL #2:** Motta never claimed the grade of 6=5, Karl Germer said Motta was a "Neophyte at best" (also, Motta claimed to be the grade of 2=9 even after the death of Karl Germer).

C) **CLAIM:** Gunther forged his own link with the "Secret Chiefs" (the "sempiternal" A.:A.:) and requires no succession from Motta or anyone else.

i) **REBUTTAL #1:** Regardless of whether or not this claim is true, this would *de facto* mean that Gunther is claiming authority within the *temporal* A.:A.: while having no direct succession or acknowledgement within the temporal organization. Pursuant to §III:3:B:i, Gunther could at best - assuming the claim is true for the sake of argument - assert himself to be the head of an "exterior school," but not that of the temporal organization of the A.:A.: that was begun by Crowley & Jones in 1907.

8) **THEREFORE:** With the current evidence, it appears that Phyllis Seckler was the ranking member of the A.:A.: until her death in 2004. Based on the "warrant"

written by Phyllis Seckler, it appears that David Shoemaker is the current ranking member of the A.:A.: and therefore - in the temporal sense - the current head of the "One True A.:A.:". Or: James Eshelman is potentially the current ranking member, yet there is no forthcoming evidence to substantiate this (which is not to say that it does not exist, only that the authors are not aware of it thus far).

9) It may be stated, with great solemnity and caution, that the authors of this document therefore honestly and earnestly question the authority of the "A.:A.:" that is currently aligned with Ordo Templi Orientis and claims to be the "One True A.:A.:."

A) This particular A.:A.: is currently run by Gunther (see §V:6:B:iii-v), and the Acting Outer Head of the Order (O.T.O.) is a student of Gunther.

B) James Wasserman, another individual who claims Gunther has his Superior within the A.:A.:, recently wrote in [Agape Vol.XIII, No.2](#) (Summer 2012), "I think the greatest failure of O.T.O. has been our unwillingness to publicly criticize the modern fallacy of A.:A.: 'lineages.' I appreciate the thinking behind this—allowing people maximum freedom to make choices, including bad choices. But I believe we have a doctrinal obligation to point out pretenders, misguided spiritual interpretations, and erroneous behavior."

i) It is therefore ironic, in light of this quotation, that the authors of this document have concluded that it is, in fact, the A.:A.: with which Wasserman aligns himself that is the "pretender," to use his wording. Nonetheless, the authors agree that "point[ing] out pretenders, misguided spiritual interpretations, and erroneous behavior" is a good thing, and that is an intention of this document.

LET EACH INDIVIDUAL who reads this document come to their own conclusions, taking nothing written as *a priori* truth without performing their own investigations, taking note of the various arguments made, discarding all arguments based on emotion and egotism, and accepting only those facts which stand strong in the light of Truth rather than crumbling upon exposure. If any information comes to light that we find requires the alteration, addition, or deletion of anything in this document, we hereby swear to amend this document with haste in the interest of maintaining its accuracy to the best of our abilities.

*In the LVX of Truth,*

Soror 33, Frater 49, Frater 120, Soror 156-93, Frater 888

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*Love is the law, love under will.*